

The background is a blue-toned collage featuring various healthcare and pharmaceutical symbols. It includes several white capsules, a molecular structure diagram, a line graph with an upward trend, a hand holding a tablet, a human figure with internal organs, a brain, a DNA double helix, and a large asterisk. The overall theme is medical and technological.

Be a Stronger Healthcare & Pharmaceutical Marketer

A Complete Digital Guide

coegi



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What You'll Learn

Healthcare and pharmaceutical marketing is a complex landscape. A long-standing emphasis on in-person rep sales and difficult to navigate privacy laws have made the industry slower to adopt new marketing technologies and trends relative to other industries.

This guide aims to debunk the uncertainty surrounding healthcare and pharma marketing best practices and provide a clear roadmap to creating a best-in-class digital strategy for your brand or the brands you partner with.

Disrupted Ecosystem - New Opportunities

The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated a large shift towards digital technologies in the healthcare landscape. Visitation restrictions forced brands to find creative new ways to communicate with patients and providers beyond traditional sales meetings.

The pandemic-induced disruptions to the healthcare ecosystem provide a massive opportunity for forward thinking brands to identify and capitalize on untapped space and establish long-term competitive advantages.

Key Trends

- Greater reliance on marketing channels rather than 1:1 meetings
- Digitization of patient care and communication
- Adoption of telehealth AI technology
- Decision makers spending more time on digital channels



71%

The acceptance of telehealth practice rose to **71% post pandemic**, despite very low adoption prior.



/ Marketing to Patients

Targeting, Channel and Measurement Strategies



Healthcare Patient Marketing

State of the Industry: Threats and Opportunities

Patient-centric healthcare and pharmaceutical brands must gain loyalty through consumer relationships. Loyalty is at a historic low while openness to change and preference for convenience are soaring.

Marketing strategies must be customer-centric to capture loyalty. In today's healthcare ecosystem, that requires leaning into **omni-channel**, **digital strategies** and **leading with empathy**.

62%

of consumers expected their preferred brand for healthcare to change post-pandemic.

80%

of patients said they'd switch providers solely for "convenience factors."

"If pharma companies are attempting to reach patients or consumers, *digital channels are where those consumers are*, where they're conducting their research, and where they want to be engaged"

Tom Swanson

Head of Industry Strategy & Marketing
Health & Life Sciences
Adobe



Patient Targeting Strategies

Despite the challenge of compliance and data privacy laws, brands still have a variety of ways to target patients by using first and third party data as well as machine learning to identify and segment ideal consumers.

Local and Geo-Targeting

Hospital systems and healthcare practices should lean heavily into local targeting to reach their local audiences. These campaigns can drive location visits, but should also increase awareness and education as 1 in 4 people surveyed said they do not know enough about local health systems to make an informed choice.

With data partners, pharmaceutical brands can target programmatic buys to specific zip codes that over-index for a particular condition. Anonymized prescription data can be matched to zip codes with the highest lift in specific prescriptions and even mapped to these households via IP addresses. This can be activated through display, video, native, and social media channels. Brands can also reach specific patients through compliant point of care geo-targeting based on foot traffic history and clinic specialty.

Zip5	Health Index	Asthma	Cancer	COPD	Depression	Diabetes	Hypertension
01001	47	68	48	39	73	28	21
01002	62	75	53	24	67	15	25
01003	71	19	44	20	79	7	28
01005	57	57	45	33	80	28	6
01007	37	66	66	51	78	31	37



Condition-Based Targeting

Use third-party data providers to access unique healthcare segments. This anonymized data is not subject to some of the strict HIPAA guidelines and allows you to reach your relevant audience at scale without media waste.

Interest Group Targeting

Interest based targeting is a great way to reach patients as well as their families and caregivers who are also interested in a specific condition or topic. This expands reach to the key decision makers in the healthcare process.

Retargeting

By placing website pixels, brands can retarget users who conducted an action on site with programmatic ads. Lookalike audiences based on quality website visitors can also be built to expand the retargeting audience pool. In instances where the topic or condition is considered sensitive, lean on the other tactics above to reach your key audiences.



Key Channels to Reach Patients

Local & Paid Search

Search engines are the first touchpoint in the patient journey as they begin researching a symptom, diagnosis, or treatment option. Brands can establish themselves as a resource and guide from the beginning with relevant, helpful content. Strong web content paired with paid search for key terms and queries help brands show up at the top of the results page. Local search is impactful when patients are looking for a healthcare location nearby.



Search retargeting can be used to identify audiences seeking relevant information and show your brand in the discovery phase.

Local Search Checklist

- ✓ Mobile optimized website
- ✓ Complete Google business profile
- ✓ Customer reviews
- ✓ Relevant web content

Social Media

Use the power of social media to build brand trust and authenticity. Most social platforms offer demographic, interest and behavioral targeting parameters. Facebook and Instagram tend to offer higher levels of segmentation for healthcare specific audiences, though this could be impacted by Facebook's new limitations on health-related interest targeting.

There is also an emerging trend of healthcare influencers with HCPs of all types becoming popular creators on channels like YouTube, Twitter and TikTok. This organic content can be highly effective, especially when amplified through paid social.



Lead Ads on social provide an easy format for pharma brands to capture privacy-safe customer information. Some ad formats we have seen success with include:

- ISI Scrolling
- Pre-populated fields to reduce friction
- Context cards to provide more brand information
- Customizable fields, CTAs and questions

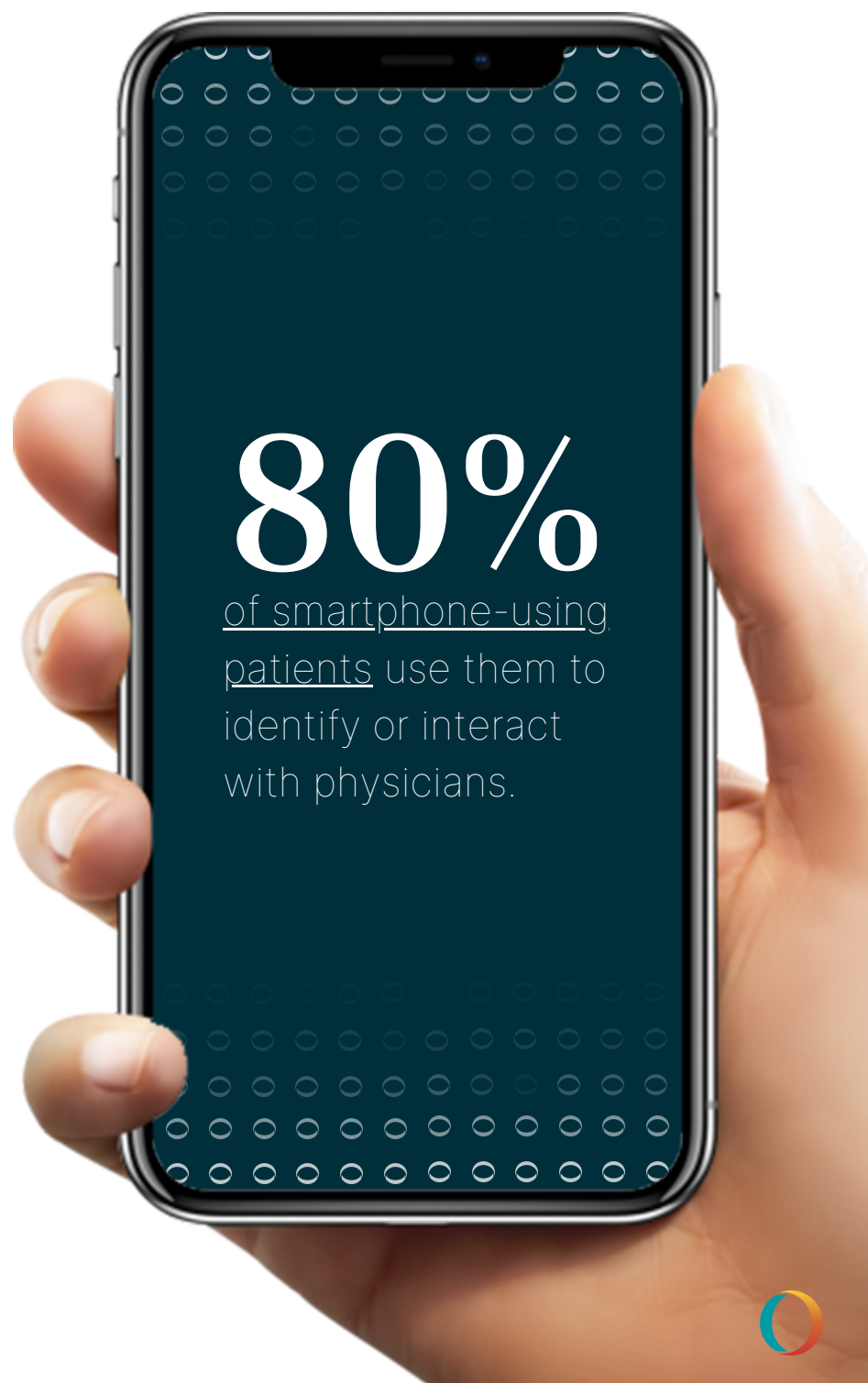
Programmatic Display

Health and pharma digital marketing spend has historically prioritized desktop display ads due to typically needing to reach an older audience demographic. However, today, patients of all ages are consuming media digitally and using mobile devices to find key information informing their healthcare choices.



Use third-party data partners to build affinity audiences: segments of users engaged with relevant condition-specific support groups on Facebook.

Contextual display targeting places ads next to relevant, trusted content when consumers are in the appropriate mindset. This can be done with keyword matching for ad placement on web pages that feature content about specific health conditions and medication, or running PMPs on specific healthcare publications.





Native Ads

Native ads are designed to match readers' interests with curated content. This format can be utilized by repurposing high performing social ad content and targeting these ads to the audience segments of the campaign.

Match these ads with contextually relevant articles to align with health content that would demonstrate how your brand or facility could best serve that individual.

Programmatic Video

Video Ads capture user attention on sites or social media channels with engaging motion and sound based messaging.

Use quality video to:

- Show brand personality and bring messaging to life
- Show your product/service in action
- Optimize for mobile placements

Connected TV

Television streaming times soared during the pandemic. This was especially true for the 55+ age range, a core healthcare audience demographic, who also make up the highest proportion of viewers, per the SpotX "[CTV is for Everyone](#)" study.

“CTV is an untapped space eliminating barriers from a cost to market perspective. *TV is now an accessible market for pharmaceutical players.*”

Colin Duft

Coegi Account Strategy Director



Measuring Campaign Results

When determining campaign performance, it's critical to understand how KPIs for all stages of the customer journey work together to create a holistic picture. Brands should start by building a custom measurement framework factoring in multiple KPIs correlated to core business goals. Think outside the box of typical stats such as CTR, CPM and CPC to find new ways to track and attribute success in a meaningful way.

Advanced Measurement

Healthcare brands with physical locations may find it difficult to measure the effects of digital marketing on in-person traffic. Medical device and pharmaceutical brands can likewise struggle to measure the blended results of in-person sales teams layered with both on and offline marketing. In these instances, advanced measurement studies can help provide answers, explore correlations, and display incremental lift in brand awareness, sales, or traffic.

What is Advanced Measurement?

Any tactics employed to answer questions unanswerable by traditional media metrics. Some of the most common approaches include brand lift, traffic lift and sales lift.

Advanced Measurement Tactics for Healthcare Brands

Foot traffic lift studies can be highly informative for hospitals or retail health brands. These studies provide online to offline attribution for campaigns aiming to drive consumers into physical locations, using mobile location data to quantify the full impact of cross-channel media campaigns on incremental increase in visitation.

Brand lift studies can be effective for pharmaceutical brands to measure the incremental impact on KPIs such as brand favorability, brand affinity or ad recall. These can gauge success for omni-channel campaigns on brand-based goals.

KPIs for Core Business Objectives

Awareness:

- Reach and Frequency
- CPM
- Ad Recall
- Completion Rate
- Cost per Completed View

Consideration:

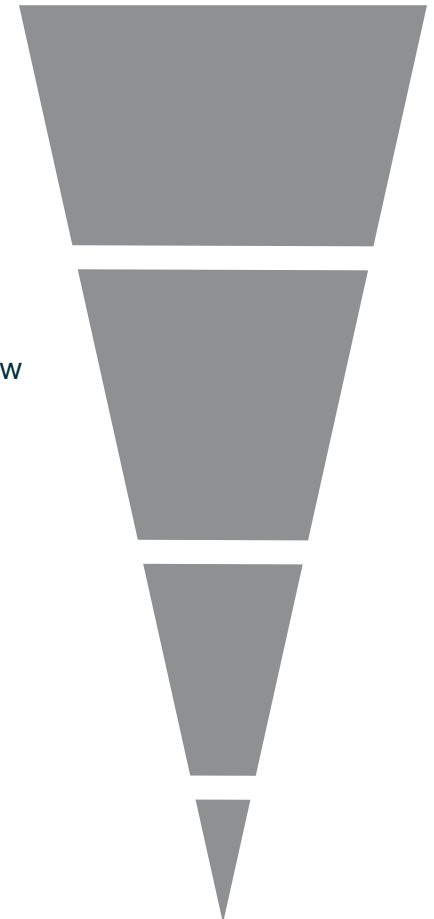
- Cost per Click
- Cost per Landing Page View
- Cost per Download
- Cost per Lead Form

Conversion:

- CPA
- Purchases
- New Sign Ups
- New Appointments

Retention:

- Cost per Engagement
- Cost per Action





/ Marketing to HCPs

Targeting, Channel and Measurement Strategies



HCP Targeting Strategies

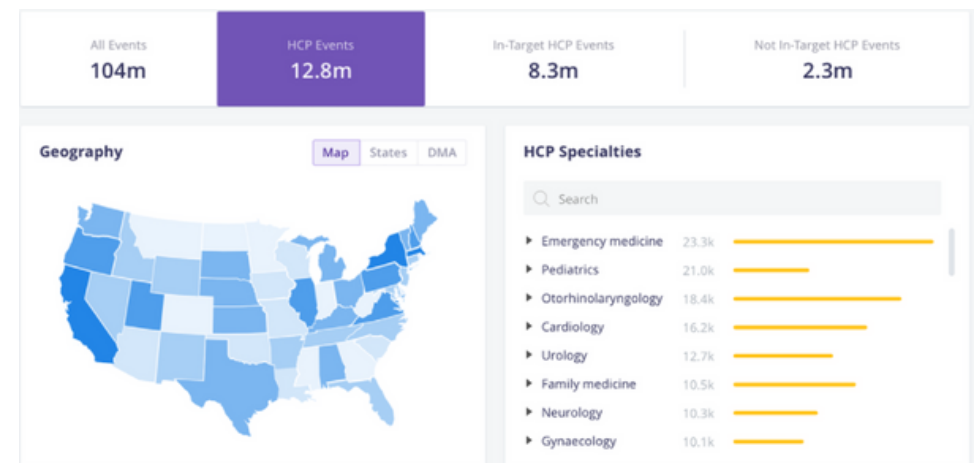
Healthcare providers are relatively easier to target than patient segments due to publicly available information and fewer privacy restrictions, though there are occasionally some challenges with achieving scale as well as dealing with higher costs. Regardless, brands can reach HCPs across the wide range of content they consume and the devices they use.

NPI Targeting

National Provider IDs are personal identifiers for specific healthcare providers including their practice location and specialty. Utilizing this data set via demand side platforms (DSPs) such as PulsePoint, MedData, CrossIX and HealthLink allows for compliant, one-to-one HCP targeting across multiple channels and devices.

Geo-Targeting

Brands can also use NPI numbers to target practice locations for particular physicians or specialties. By targeting a geo-radius around POC locations with high volumes of particular diagnoses or treatment types, brands can remain compliant with HIPAA and the guidelines set out by the NAI for approaching sensitive states while also reaching the target audience.



Source



HCP Retargeting

Re-engage prospective HCPs who have already visited a brand site with highly relevant creative. This tactic helps push providers from the awareness to consideration phase, with the ultimate intent to bring them back towards the website and continue engaging based on prior actions.

Website visitors who are retargeted with display ads are more likely to convert by 70%

70%

The CTR of a retargeted ad is 10x higher than a typical display ad

10x

Spiralytics

Contextual Targeting

Contextual targeting tools can look at category, keywords and tags on webpages to deliver highly relevant content through programmatic channels. At Coegi, we map these to the National Library of Medicine MeSH Taxonomy to ensure the most relevant terminology is applied to our digital media.

Rx and Dx Targeting

Through data partnerships, brands can target NPI numbers of providers who are known prescribers of certain prescription codes. Likewise, brands can target by diagnosis using ICD-10 codes to find their core HCP customers.



Key Channels to Reach HCPs

Targeted Display on Endemic Sites

Reach healthcare providers on key sites where they visit to stay up-to-date on the latest trends and best practices in their field. These endemic sites are a more premium placement due to higher prices and lower supply.

HCP Network: Doximity

Doximity is the leading social networking site specifically for healthcare providers which has been widely adopted by healthcare systems in recent years. There are a variety of high volume placements which brands can take advantage of including sponsored educational content or in-feed ad placements. This can be a particularly helpful channel for new or emerging brands looking to educate and inform physicians about their product offering and its usage/implications.

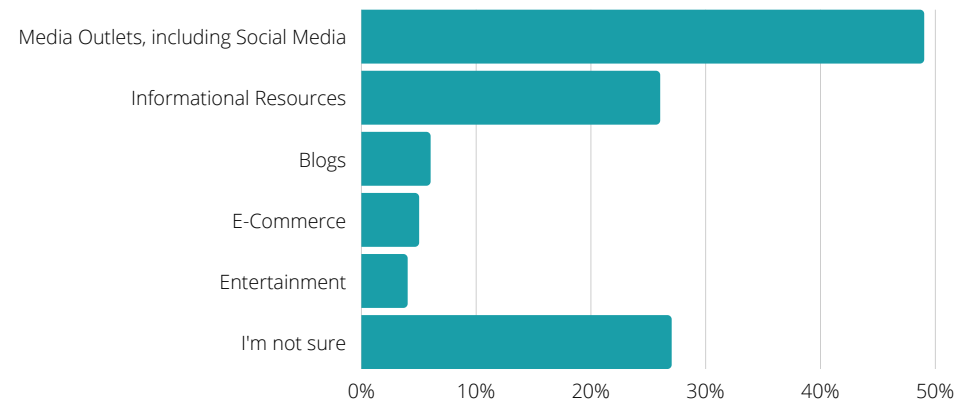
Paid Social

Social media provides a way to reach HCPs where they are active online outside of their professional environment. Use data providers to access ailment clusters and physician title/license databases which are available for online targeting on social and search. A [MedData survey found](#) social media is the channel where HCPs are most likely to engage with healthcare advertising when they are not on endemic sites.

MedData Survey:

Upon viewing an ad on non-healthcare sites, which types of website would you engage with professional healthcare advertising?

[MedData](#)



Programmatic

Display is the fastest-growing ad format in healthcare and pharma. Programmatic distribution of targeted ads to HCPs enable healthcare marketers to promote relevant information to them outside the limitations of endemic websites. Programmatic video is highly effective at capturing audience attention and sharing product information with providers.

Programmatic TV: CTV is also a viable channel for reaching HCPs on a 1:1 basis; however, the premium placements layered with exclusive data can sometimes limit the usage on smaller budgets.

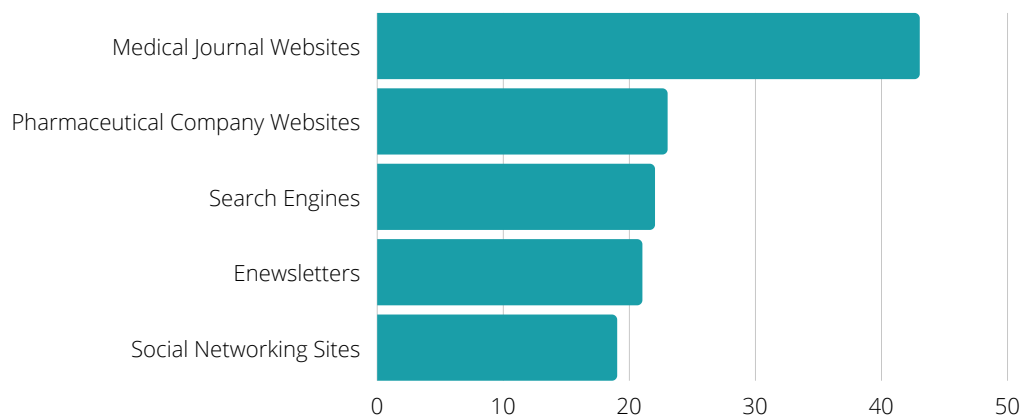
Benefits of Programmatic:

- Inspire higher click volume
- Optimize in real-time
- Test creative for most impact

Paid Search

Practitioners rely heavily on online resources to find new techniques, products, and information relevant to their practice. An eMarketer survey of healthcare practitioners showed that outside of medical and pharmaceutical websites, they prefer to receive communication from companies via search engines. Furthermore, 38% of US practitioners were likely to access information from search engines in lieu of sales representatives during the pandemic.

Top 5 Sources of US Healthcare Practitioners Want Pharmaceutical Companies to Use to Distribute Information During the Coronavirus Pandemic, March 2020





Measuring Campaign Results

When advertising to HCPs, the 1:1 addressability of some tactics allows for clearly traceable marketing ROI. However, other tactics can have less direct attribution towards objectives. In these instances, advanced measurement studies can help provide answers, explore correlations, and display incremental lift in metrics such as brand awareness, brand affinity and sales lift.

Advanced Measurement Tactics

Brand lift studies can gauge success for omni-channel campaigns on brand-based goals. Awareness surveys with key practitioner groups can inform how a brand is perceived and the level of recognition or ad recall achieved within a target audience.

"Understanding what metrics signal success is especially crucial now as third-party data scale diminishes and privacy laws become stricter.

Marketers will need to creatively implement accurate and insightful measurement frameworks to track success and make informed optimizations."

Ryan Green

VP of Marketing and Innovation, Coegi



HIPAA-Compliant Advertising

As a charter member of the Programmatic Health Council, Coegi has been at the forefront of the industry in delivering comprehensive, best-in-class, HIPAA-compliant digital media campaigns for many of the leading health marketing agencies and brands.

BEST PRACTICES

- Ensure FDA compliance of campaigns including messaging and targeting with legal council.
- Educate and inform HCPs with strong ad copy and landing pages for unbranded disease initiatives to prime this audience to quickly convert upon FDA approval of the drug.
- Use de-identified information from third party data providers for patient behavioral targeting.
- Consider using the drug name as a keyword and include in ad copy, but do not make written verbal or graphic representations or suggestions concerning the safety, efficacy, or intended use of the drug.
- Implement negative keyword segments to ensure ads will not appear next to disease state that could create unwanted connotations.
- Gain user opt-in consent for sensitive health segment retargeting.



Social Creative Do's & Don'ts

Don'ts

- Refer to online users directly as "you".
- Refer to users symptoms or conditions in ad copy.
- Keep all language in reference to the product or service.
- Use violent or graphic images in ads.
- Promote the sale of any drugs.
- Direct to any landing page that sells drugs or houses non-compliant messaging.

Do's

- Have all asset's reviewed by a regulatory entity to ensure compliance.
- Use a variety of ad types based on the actions you want the user to make.
- Employ users to seek additional information on the website where you can deliver a more detailed message.
- Use ISI and disclaimers in several areas on you ads and landing pages.
- Have Coegi review any copy you are concerned about for recommendation.



The healthcare industry as a whole is pivoting towards data-driven strategies. Events, provider education, and patient treatment itself have shifted from in-person to blended online channels. Omni-channel advertising strategies work in tandem with consumer preferences moving towards digital treatment options such as tele-health to supplement more traditional healthcare.

Moving forward into the cookieless future, it will be key for health and pharma brands to facilitate a value exchange in order to collect user first party data. We can expect a continued trend in increased addressability and segmentation options for anonymized targeting as currently being seen with CTV and programmatic TV buying.

In summary, here are our healthcare digital marketing best practices. For more information and resources on becoming a stronger healthcare marketer, contact Coegi today or [visit our blog](#) for additional content.

Digital Marketing Best Practices

LEAD WITH EMPATHY



Ensure you are meeting HIPAA guidelines by using trusted data partners for compliant targeting to patients and HCPs.

Create lifetime relationships before care is needed with upper funnel tactics. Tailor creative for both patients and their caregivers/loved ones.

BUILD A SMART STRATEGY



Optimize for Paid & Organic Search

Create mobile-first websites and use website retargeting to reach your highest potential audiences. Apply AI learning to build lookalike audiences and expand reach.



Embrace Omnichannel Approach

Integrate platforms to establish optimal reach and frequency. Utilize digital and social channels to build trust.



Leverage 1:1 Targeting Options

Partner with a media agency to tailor niche audience segments through addressable channels.

FOLLOW INDUSTRY TRENDS



77% of patients use search prior to booking an appointment**



59.1% of health & pharma spend was on search in 2021*



75% of Americans use social media to research their health symptoms**



42.9% of health & pharma digital spend is allocated to non-mobile leaving untapped space*

*eMarketer

**eMarketer





/ Performance Marketing Agency

Connecting Brands to the Audiences That Matter Most

About Coegi

Coegi is a performance marketing partner for brands and agencies that is enabled with a best-in-class technology stack to deliver custom digital solutions to meet your goals. Our team is made up of practitioners that strive for innovation and progression while treating brand dollars with the accountability of performance media.

Using data-backed personas, we create an audience targeting channel strategy brought to life with a continual “test & learn” approach toward optimization. This is all supported with a strong measurement strategy to ensure each and every channel contributes back to the established business goals.

For more information, visit:

www.coegipartners.com

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Capabilities

Programmatic

Display
Online Video
Native
CTV/OTT
Streaming Audio
DOOH
Paid Search

Paid Social

Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
LinkedIn
Snapchat
Pinterest
TikTok

Strategic Services

Research
Planning
Strategy
Audits
Technology Vetting

Influencer

Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
LinkedIn
Snapchat
Pinterest
TikTok